TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT: RECOMMENDATION FOR

REVOCATION OF AUTHORIZATION - YORKTOWN

**UNIVERSITY** 

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#### I. SUMMARY

This action item recommends revocation of authorization for Yorktown University under the Degree Authorization Act due to Yorktown University's withdrawal of accreditation by the Distance Education and Training Council.

# II. <u>BACKGROUND</u>

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act, which sets out the terms under which certain types of institutions<sup>1</sup> may offer degrees or degree credits. Persons or organizations that violate the provisions of the statute are subject to legal penalties.

All private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, seminaries and bible colleges are required to register with the Colorado Department of Higher Education and to meet criteria in CCHE Policy Section I Part J, Degree Authorization Act, in order to have authorization to offer degrees within Colorado. Such authorization by CCHE must be received by the institution prior to the institution: offering any program of instruction, academic credits, or degrees; opening a place of business; soliciting students or enrollees; or offering educational support services.

Pursuant to state law, a private college or university is required to be accredited on the basis of an on-site review in Colorado by a nationally recognized regional or national accrediting association.

### II. STAFF ANALYSIS

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education voted to approve initial authorization of Yorktown University November 24, 2003. Since that time, Yorktown University was accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC) in June 2008 and, based on that

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> (1) Colorado publicly supported colleges and universities; (2) properly accredited private colleges and universities; (3) postsecondary seminaries and bible colleges; and (4) private occupational schools authorized by the Division of Private Occupational Schools.

accreditation status, Yorktown University received full authorization from CCHE in September 2008.

On July 16, 2012, Department Staff received notice from Yorktown University's President, Richard Bishirjian, Ph.D., regarding the university's Board of Trustees recommendation to voluntarily relinquish its accreditation with the Distance Education and Training Council.

However, at its meeting on June 15, 2012, the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council took action to withdraw Yorktown University's accreditation. Yorktown University chose not to appeal the Accrediting Commission's decision. The withdrawal of accreditation was confirmed August 22, 2012.

According to the public notice on the DETC's website, the DETC Accrediting Commission withdrew accreditation from Yorktown University for the following reason:

The DETC Accrediting Commission concluded that Yorktown University failed to demonstrate compliance with Standards IX, which requires that an "institution can document that it is financially responsible and is in control of its financial matters. The institution can demonstrate that it will continue to operate as a going concern for the benefit of students, and is capable of producing accurate and timely financial information."

# IV. <u>STAFF RECOMMENDATION</u>

Staff recommends that the Commission revoke the authorization for Yorktown University to operate in Colorado.

### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S. §23-2-103.3